1545

Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

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"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."

JOHN HAY.

Corollaries.

— Greenbackers have every reason to feel encouraged and elated. They have been ridiculed, denounced, and brushed aside as absolute idiots, by the "statesmen" of both parties, so long, and with such apparent confidence, that they themselves must have learned to regard Greenbackism as a very wild financial heresy. Their amazement now must be great indeed to be called upon to witness such an unprecedented rush of new and distinguished converts to their creed from the ranks of both great orthodox parties. Of Matthew Marshall's conversion I have already taken notice, and now I must record the fact that the "greatest Republican authority on finance," John Sherman, has announced himself a Greenbacker, — announced himself, too, in language singularly rich in characteristically Greenback associations. In a recent speech, after frankly conceding the necessity of devising a substitute for the present national bank notes, he proceeded to favor "money issued directly by the United States and resting upon the wealth, honor, and resources of 65,000,000 people." No Greenback expression ever had so much contempt and biting sarcasm heaped upon it as this of basing money "upon the wealth, honor, and resources" of the American nation; yet now it is naively used by the "great financier," Sherman! Sherman will naturally be followed by other Republican statesmen, as Matthew Marshall will be endorsed by Democratic economists, and thus will Greenbackism become the creed of the orthodox, the only alternative to freer money and banking. Such a revolutionary change in the attitude of the political parties will be hailed by old Greenbackers with enthusiastic delight, but we free-money advocates have no occasion to regret or lament the new turn of affairs. Not *all* believers in national bank notes will espouse Greenbackism; some at least may be expected to go in our direction. Besides, it is very important to have the issue simplified, clarified, and redeemed from the numerous misconceptions which exist. With the prevailing system out of the way as a factor or term in the problem, the question becomes clearly one of deciding between some form of fiatism or Greenbackism and some form of sound private, free currency. Now if the people should surprise us by exhibiting a sagacity and appreciation of freedom with which we do not credit them and declaring a preference for free money, it would of course be well; if, on the other hand, they should be deluded into the Greenback experiment, well also, though not *so* well. Well, because the experiment would be necessarily as brief as it would be catastrophic and exciting.

— In justice to the leading Massachusetts Democrats and political speakers, it must be said that they are better than their platform; the "rubbish" to which Mr. Tucker very properly directed attention in referring to the Massachusetts plank bearing on State bank circulation is conspicuous by its absence in the expositions offered on the stump. Congressman Williams, who is respected by our "business community" as a perfectly "safe" and prudently conservative financier, — this reputation having been acquired by his negative work on the silver issue in Congress, — had devoted an entire address to the currency question, which is remarkably free from "rubbish" on its constructive side, while being bold and radical on its negative side. He did not hesitate to dispute President Harrison's "unfortunate statement" (as he termed it) that "it is the business of the government to furnish the people with money," and to assert, on the contrary, that "there is now a dire necessity for the cessation of congressional interference with the currency" and for leaving "to commercial interests to expand and contract the volume of money according to the necessities of trade." Opposing the fiatism and Greenbackism which Senator Sherman and others have blundered into, Congressman Williams demands that "the whole matter be relegated to banks which are in touch with trade and commerce, and which by that touch will know the necessity for increased or diminished use of money." As to the crucial question of legal interference, whether congressional or State, with these banks and financial interests, Mr. Williams is not ready with any final declaration. He pleads for further discussion, information, light, and declines to commit himself to any proposition save this, — that the removal of the tax should mean a limit of the exemption to such banks as "*properly secure their circulation.*" Now I maintain that such an attitude on the part of a Democratic politician is symptomatic of political progress, and that it behooves those of us who, unhampered by campaign conditions, penetrate to the core of the question and feel free to proclaim the whole truth, — it behooves us, I say, to recognize healthy signs of advance, and welcome attempts at enlarging the sphere of liberty. This course by no means implies that we should connive at double dealing and hypocrisy, abdicate our proper function of critically estimating persons and events, or forbear to give warning when danger is ahead.

— The manner in which Republican fools (forgive the tautology) have been trying to make political capital out of Liberty's treatment of the Democracy's handling of the currency problem is characteristic and highly amusing. The New York "Press" has been calling the Democratic party "the party of Anarchy" on the strength of Liberty's words anent the demand for the repeal of the tax on circulation. Did the "Press" stop here, there would be nothing to complain of or swear about. But the poor fool goes on to talk of the Anarchistic design to flood the country with worthless and wild-cat money in a way to lead an outsider to infer that the "Press" had, from the start, understood the Anarchistic programme and known that the flooding of the country with worthless "currency" was one of the methods relied on to bring the ruin and chaos which constituted the desiderata of Anarchists. Not satisfied with the campaign of fraud, humbug, and contemptible nonsense against the Democracy, the "Press" must needs drag the Anarchists into the controversy and thus increase its opportunities for the exhibition of stupidity and rascality. Not satisfied to repeat what it learned from Liberty about the real Anarchistic tendencies of the Democratic platform, it must needs invent absurd charges and false accusations in order to make the case as strong as possible, in the eyes of the ignorant and timid, against the Democracy, even though in the process it succeed in convicting itself of blackguardism and idiocy. After quoting Liberty's endorsement as evidence that the Democracy is the party of Anarchy, it winds up by lumping together Liberty, worthless money, bombthrowing, Most, Berkman, Cleveland, free trade, and Democracy. This shows how well the "Press" has mastered Liberty's first lesson. V. Y.

Comment on "What's to be Done."

In that far land of freedom whither we aspire,
There men and women, freely, hand in hand,
Shall seek those joys most to their hearts' desire,
And find them in that land.

Joys there are found like prairies ever widening,
Upon which pain and grief, mere shadows, lie
Cast by the clouds above when briefly hiding
The one great light on high.

There principles shall guide the search for beauty,
And beauty, hidden, ever come to view,
And strong attractions, taking place of duty,
Guide minds to what is true.

To those fair forms of truth most fundamental
Of all the forms which can to them be known,
Making them masters of what's elemental,
Making the best their own.

P.

Oppression.

Brothers, ye still must suffering endure;—
'Tis life's hard way its ills through pain to cure.
And cured shall yours be when your agony
Wrings you at last to ope your eyes and see.

Harry Lyman Koopman.

Liberty.

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"In abolishing rent and interest, the last vestiges of old-time slavery, the Revolution abolishes at one stroke the sword of the executioner, the seal of the magistrate, the club of the policeman, the gauge of the excisemen, the erasing-knife of the department clerk, all those insignia of Politics, which young Liberty grinds beneath her heel."—PROUDHON.

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No Hope from Politics.

I am in cordial agreement with all that Mr. Yarros says in another column regarding the attitude of certain individual Democrats on the question of free banking, and my first article on this subject was written expressly to recognize these "healthy signs of advance" and to welcome this "attempt at enlarging the sphere of liberty." At the same time it was necessary to point out that the Democratic party itself, taken as a whole, simply intends to substitute one form of regulation for another; that the new form would be even worse than that now existing; and that this substitution, effected in the name of liberty, would surely end in disaster and thus do serious injury to our cause. But, I have been asked, would not the Democratic party do more for liberty in other directions than the Republicans do, and, if so, why oppose the Democratic party? My answer is that I oppose no party in the sense of seeking to increase the vote against it, my advice being to vote not at all. But it is necessary to recognize that, whichever party is in power, the moneyed interests are sure to control it. The only superiority of the Democratic party at present consists in the fact that, partly because of its libertarian traditions (to which it never hesitates to do violence) and partly because it is out of power, it attracts to its ranks a number of sincere men who are anxious for a change. But have we not for years been witnesses of the effect of good men going into politics? The good men become less good, and politics no better. Mr. George Fred Williams will be unable to control the Democratic party.

The Anarchist, while noting with joy the appearance of truth in party platforms, because of the educational influence thereof, must steadfastly discourage the view that anything can be expected from political action. He should point out to each party the sins of the other, and then watch the fight of the Kilkenny cats. When they have brought each other into thorough disrepute, there will be a chance then for liberty. But those who are looking to the Democratic party for liberty in trade or liberty in banking will get nothing of the sort, but simply a revenue tariff *adjusted incidentally* with an eye to American interests, and State regulation of finance instead of National regulation. Both of these "reforms" would damage liberty by the addition of hypocrisy to injustice. T.

Surprise for Surprise.

"The attempt made by some individualists of extreme views," remarks a "Westminster Review" sociologist, "to show that *personal freedom* should be the highest aim in any community, and that, if carried to its ultimate issue, no individual member should yield his liberty by association with others, we must look upon as the outcome of the most abject selfishness. The individual man by himself sinks to an animal of the primate type 'Homo'; and only in association with his fellow-men can he develop all his higher and better faculties. Association is the greatest faculty in the development of the human family." So far, so good, provided we know just how to take the sociologist's statements. Although I have never discovered the existence of individualists who quarrel with the very principle of association and who are so disappointed with the results of our associative efforts that they are determined to reform association altogether, I am not hardy enough to say, with some Neo-Gnostic philosopher, or ignorant enough to say, with Thérèse Raquin, that "what I do not know does not exist." I am willing to believe that the "Westminster Review" sociologist knows whereof he speaks when he refers to "some individualists of extreme views" and to "attempts made" by them. Further, if it is his opinion that the aversion to the development of one's "higher and better faculties" is appropriately characterized by the words, "the outcome of the most abject selfishness," those who would not put the thing exactly as he does need raise no objection, since his proposition is distinctly dependent for meaning on his own definition of "abject selfishness." I infer that "abject selfishness" is something very low and unreasonable, since the sociologist, after averring that it is indifferent to the development of the higher and better faculties, adds, rather inconsistently perhaps, that it is also reckless of the plain fact that association gives us "great facility in the production of wealth and security of life in our battle with nature." This makes it clear that abject selfishness wants neither high nor low gratification, neither prosperity nor security; and we become fully prepared to share the sociologist's intense dislike of the mysterious individualists who are so destitute of reason and instinct.

But the sociologist has a surprise for us — and for himself. He continues: "It seems to be one of the greatest aberrations of the human mind to see a solution of our troubles in the application of Anarchistic principles, *in accordance with which* the individual is placed outside all possible associations and connections with his fellowman." This is a jolly surprise, indeed, for us! So it is the Anarchists of whom our crafty sociologist has been saying all these things; it is the Anarchists whom he has been charging with the abject selfishness which obstinately refuses all the blessings of life, — material, intellectual, and emotional! How glad I am not to have been betrayed into a hasty and impulsive defence of the victims of the sociologist's wrath! Had I been less deliberate and prudent, I should have been deprived of the pleasure of giving the sociologist surprise for surprise. My surprise for him is the announcement that I, his sympathetic critic and appreciative student, am an Anarchist myself! The physical fact of my existence being conclusive proof of the proposition that love of association, ideals, progress, and all things of good repute is not incompatible with rigid and faithful adherence to Anarchistic principles, the sociologist has no alternative but to confess that the species which he describes (assuming that it really exists) is so totally unlike that known to careful investigators as Anarchistic that both cannot possibly belong to the same genus or even to the same order. Our sociologist should study the Anarchistic species, for it seems entirely fit to survive and absorb all the other species that share its habitat. V. Y.

John Fiske on Taxation.

That thirst for knowledge which leads men to make great efforts to become acquainted with the countless forms of life and to discover the principles in accordance with which the evolution of things proceeds is a great passion with great men.

But in their eagerness to acquire this knowledge, how often they forget the adage, "make haste slowly." In eager haste they rummage the great libraries of the world, devour books and parts of books, and obtain something which, with slight variations, they pass on to posterity as the knowledge of their time.

And one would do well to think twice before stoning another as a sinner for not exercising due discrimination.

But there are some subjects of such great importance that it would be well worth the while for one to make the most of his ability to discriminate in learning about them and treating of them.

One such is mentioned in Fiske's "Beginnings of New England," p. 31.

> The fundamental principle of political freedom is, No taxation without representation.
>
> You must not take a farthing of my money without consulting my wishes as to the use that shall be made of it. Only when this principle of justice was first practically recognized, did government begin to divorce

itself from the primitive bestial barbaric system of tyranny and plunder, and to ally itself with the forces that in the fulness of time are to bring peace on earth and good will to men.

What does Mr. Fiske mean by saying, "You must not take a farthing of my money without consulting my wishes as to the use that shall be made of it"?

If some one says to me: "I propose to take $2,000 of your money and build a house with it; here is the plan of the house; it is well arranged, and, being placed near some of your vacant lots, people will be induced to settle there, and you will be a gainer in the end," would such a "consultation" be a justification for taking my money?

Does a form of parley with the victim give the ruler or robber justification for taking away a victim's money? If so, is it not useless to talk about "consent of the governed" at all? If, however, the *consent* of an individual should be obtained before taking away any of his money, can it be truthfully said that any government has ever practically recognized this "principle of justice"?

In Mr. Fiske's "War of Independence," p. 18, a statement is made which differs from the above; it has appeared necessary to introduce something about "public purposes" to justify taxation.

> A free country is one in which the government cannot take away people's money in the shape of taxes, except for strictly public purposes and with the consent of the people themselves, as expressed by some body of representatives whom the people have chosen.
>
> If people's money can be taken from them without their consent, no matter how small the amount, even if it be less than one dollar out of every thousand, then they are not politically free. They do not govern, but the power that takes their money without their consent is the power that governs; and there is nothing to prevent such a power from using the money thus obtained to strengthen itself until it can trample upon the people's rights in every direction, and rob them of their homes and lives as well as their money.

What is the meaning of the expression "strictly public purposes" in the above quotation?

Is, for instance, money raised by taxation to support schools raised for a "strictly public" purpose?

Herbert Spencer, whose philosophy has found an advocate in Mr. Fiske, speaking of the system of education supported by taxation, says: "No one, I say, would have dreamt that out of so innocent looking a germ would have so quickly evolved this tyrannical system tamely submitted to by people who fancy themselves free."

In some places theatres are supported from money raised by taxation. Is a tax for schools for "strictly public purposes" and one for theatres not? Is a tax for a public park for a strictly public purpose and one for a zoölogical garden, a beer garden, or a circus, in the same, not for a "strictly public purpose"?

Boats for pleasure in public parks have already come; is there any reason why there should not also be public ninepin alleys?

What principle shall determine what purposes should be considered as "strictly public" and what not?

Unless some such principle can be clearly enunciated, it would seem foolish to mention the strictly public character of a purpose as a justification for a tax.

Let us notice the phrase, "the government cannot take away people's money in the shape of taxes."

If government is identical with the people, it would seem absurd to speak of its *taking away* money from the people.

For a man to steal his own money is about as easy as to throw three sixes at once with a pair of dice.

It is hard to avoid the inference that the government spoken of is separate from the people, whether the money is used for strictly public purposes or not; yet a little farther on it is said that "they (the people) do not govern, but the power that thus takes their money without their consent is the power that governs," etc.

Yes, it is perfectly clear that the power that thus takes their money is the government and not the people; but may one ask if taking away people's money even for "strictly public purposes" would obviate the evil that "they (the people) do not govern"? There is failure on the part of Mr. Fiske to show that the so-called representatives of the people are representatives of those who deny voluntary consent to their acts.

Edmund Burke said: "The king is the representative of the people."

Will Mr. Fiske show us how a king can be said to claim such a title improperly, and yet how a congressman, whose assumptions of authority are opposed by certain people, can be called their representative?

In John Fiske's "War of Independence" we find the following:

> At the bottom of this, as of all the disputes that led to the Revolution, lay the ultimate question whether the Americans were bound to yield obedience to laws which they had no share in making.
>
> This question, and the spirit that answered it flatly and doggedly in the negative, were heard like an undertone pervading all the arguments in Otis's wonderful speech, and it was because of this that the young lawyer, John Adams, who was present, afterward declared that on that day "the child independence was born."

Lest we be of those who garnish the sepulchres of the prophets among our fathers and stone those now living, would we not do well to ask whether the ultimate question to-day is not: Are *individuals* bound to yield obedience to laws which they have no share in making, or to which they do not yield consent?

Then, as now, was not the question simply one of the authority of men over other men?

In John Fiske's "Civil Government in the United States," p. 8, occurs the following:

> The Government is that which taxes. If individuals take away some of your property for purposes of their own, it is robbery; you lose your money and get nothing in return.
>
> But if the government takes away some of your property in the shape of taxes, it is supposed to render to you an equivalent in the shape of good government, something without which our lives and property would not be safe. Herein seems to lie the difference between taxation and robbery.
>
> When the highwayman points his pistol at me and I hand him my purse and watch, I am robbed. But when I pay the tax collector, who can seize my watch or sell my house over my head if I refuse, I am simply paying what is fairly due from me toward supporting the government.

In the above extract the difference between taxation and robbery is not dependent on the consent of the victim, but rather on the supposition (a foolish one) that the victim is getting something without which his life and property would not be safe.

Few men know better than Mr. Fiske that an enormous part of the money raised by taxation does not go for things without which life and property would not be safe. Is not the taking of this money robbery? On page 8 he says:

> If the business of governing is placed in the hands of men who have an imperfect sense of their duty toward the public, if such men raise money by taxation and then spend it on their own pleasures, or to increase their political influence, or for other illegitimate purposes, it is really robbery, just as much as if these men were to stand with pistols by the roadside, and empty the wallets of people passing by.

On p. 129, however, the author says:

> Legislation is usually a mad scramble in which the final result, be it good or bad, gets evolved out of compromises and bargains among a swarm of clashing local and personal interests. The "consideration" may be anything from logrolling to bribery.

Now, does legislation which is a "mad scramble" imply an "imperfect sense" of "duty toward the public" or not?

If the legislation which is "usually" a "mad scramble" does mean an "imperfect sense" of "duty toward the public," then, according to Mr. Fiske, taxation is "usually" "really robbery." Moreover, it would seem as though Mr. Fiske thought that the sense of "duty toward the public" was not to be counted among the office-holder's sources of pleasure.

The office-holder who possessed such a sense of duty must be in a highly interesting condition.

When he mounts the stump, let him beware of saying: "It will always be my pleasure to expend the public revenues for the advantage of the people."

Instructed by Mr. Fiske, he will say: "It will always be my disgust" or "my pain," and the taxpayers will naturally have confidence in their model legislator.

In the days of our revolutionary forefathers that *sentiment* which led them to secure independence from Great Britain had not been supplemented by clear *scientific* thought, and it is unfortunately true that much that they *said* can be used to favor compulsory taxation, but at times the Spirit of Liberty inspired them to better utterances, and *those* are the ones to which future historians, who know what liberty is, and love it, will point. For instance, in the speech of Dr. Joseph Warren (March 5, 1775) may be found (italics mine):

> And no man or body of men can, without being guilty of flagrant injustice, claim a right to dispose of the persons or acquisitions of *any other man*, unless it can be proved that such a right has arisen from some compact between the parties in which it has been explicitly and *freely* granted.

Such words are more likely to help men to love independence and justice than the confusing din which is raised over "no taxation without representation," especially when the echoes come back in such words as these from John Fiske: "But when I pay the tax collector, who can seize my watch or sell my house over my head if I refuse, I am simply paying what is fairly due from me toward supporting the government."

Whatever support such words may have in expressions uttered by our revolutionary forefathers, too much engaged in their struggles for much careful scientific thought, they are rather

of the letter that kills than of the spirit, the spirit of liberty, which gives life.

ALDEN.

Lullaby.

Hither, enchanting noise,
The sound of rivers rushing to the sea,
Now lull my babe for me,
Filling her ears with all harmonious joys;
Come, then, you wandering wind,
And crown the pines with your melodious song,
You mirthful shadows throng,
And ye, slow-pacing clouds, crowd thick behind,
Like moving mountains capped with light,
Or outspread wings of night,
Or sable feathers soft with silver lined.
But hence, ye discords harsh, unholy,
Of disproportioned folly,
Of human quarrel and the strife
To gain for self the wealth of Life,
With jarring cries that rend the Earth,
Of despot greed and forlorn peoples' dearth.
War-shouts that would threaten Love,
Hawk-screams hovering o'er the dove,
Begone and get fast hence with all your kind,
And vex not my infant's mind,
Prowling bears and howling wolves.
But come, ye gentle gulfs
Whose waters green on balmy beaches
Fill hollow caves and sandy reaches
With murmurs of a lonely shore
Where the Pacific rollers pour
Their saffron shells on a coral reef,
And no notes of haunting grief
Stir the long, smooth, blue lagoon,
Underneath the yellow moon.
Hither, sigh of shaking corn
On a sunny summer morn!
Hither, sound of golden wheat
Beaten down by satyr feet!
Hither, lambs' call in the spring!
Hither, birds' song on the wing!
Hither, all enchanting noise!
Lull my baby with your joys.

Miriam Daniell.

To Each His World.

In me my world was born,
With me my world will die,
And what I see at eve or morn
Lies folded in my eye.

I hear a melody,
You think you hear it too,
But yet a different minstrelsy
Is yours, a different view.

Your world with you uprose,
With you your world will set,
For you, my friend, a new wind blows,
For you fresh dews are wet.

Seek not for sympathy,
Tell none your joys are fair,
No other man your earth may see,
Or pluck your flowers rare.

Be rather as the gods,
Keep your own counsel well;
Self-centred, tread the magic roads
O'er valley and o'er fell.

Immortal, stand alone,
See the procession pass,
Hearken to laughter and to moan
Of unit and of mass.

Immortal, taste alone
The feast in banquet halls,
And then, when all the shades are gone,
And all the feasting palls,

Fold thought about your brain,
Hazard what means the show,
And sleep the dreamless sleep again,
Forgetting joy and woe.

Miriam Daniell.

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